

Remarks Following Discussions With Secretary General Lord Robertson of
the North Atlantic Treaty Organization
October 10, 2001

The President. Lord Robertson, thank you very much for coming. I appreciate your friendship, and I appreciate the consultations we just had.

I want to welcome Nick Burns, our Ambassador to NATO, and of course, Secretary of State Colin Powell, as well.

Within 28 hours of the assault on September 11th, NATO, for the first time in its 52 years of existence, invoked the collective defense clause. It didn't take long for our friends to respond. A lot of that had to do with the leadership of Lord Robertson. This was an act of great friendship in a time of great need, and our country will never forget.

Today, NATO nations are acting together in a broad campaign against terror. Britain is side by side with us in Afghanistan. The nations of NATO are sharing intelligence, coordinating law enforcement, and cracking down on the financing of terrorist organizations. Some NATO members will provide logistic support to military operations, and others have offered to fight if we deem necessary.

And right now, in an unprecedented display of friendship, NATO air surveillance aircraft are on their way to the United States to help keep our country safe. Lord Robertson, I want to thank you for that as well, and so do the American people. This has never happened before, that NATO has come to help defend our country. But it happened in this time of need, and for that, we're grateful.

Together, we're building a very strong coalition against terror, and NATO is the cornerstone of that coalition. But I want to remind my fellow citizens, the coalition goes way beyond NATO.

Russia is sharing intelligence and offering strong diplomatic support. The Organization of American States invoked the collec-

tive defense clause of the Rio Treaty. Japan and Korea are offering logistical and other support. I had a great conversation with Jiang Zemin of China about his desire to join us in fighting terrorist activities.

Military forces from Australia and New Zealand are standing by to assist in combat roles if needed. In Africa, the Organization of African Unity has moved quickly and strongly to condemn the attacks, and many are offering basic services, such as overflight and the sharing of intelligence. In the Middle East, many nations, including Jordan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, are offering law enforcement, intelligence, and other cooperation.

In short, many nations understand what NATO expressed, that an attack on us is really an attack on legitimate governments and on freedom.

I want to welcome, again, our friend to the Rose Garden. Lord Robertson has provided extraordinary leadership for an incredibly important alliance. He's a good Scotsman, like many Americans are. He could have been a Texan, it seems like to me, because he is courageous, open, forthright, and not afraid to take a stand and to do what's right for freedom.

Lord Robertson, welcome to the Rose Garden.

Secretary General Lord Robertson. Mr. President, thank you for these kind and generous words. I'll take them back to the headquarters of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, because that is the organization that you're part of, we're part of, and which has stood in solidarity over all of these years.

I want to pay a tribute to your leadership during this difficult time for your country, in this difficult time for the world, as well. We stand shoulder to shoulder in a new

kind of struggle, and a struggle that we have to win.

The NATO Allies, in the wake of the terrible atrocities of the 11th of September, wanted to move beyond sadness and sympathy, and we moved to solidarity and support. And that is why we invoked Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, conceived here in Washington in 1949 in very difficult circumstances and where the language is clear and simple: An attack on one is an attack on all of the nations of the Alliance.

NATO still represents the biggest permanent coalition on this planet: 19 nations in the Alliance, 27 nations in addition in the Partnership For Peace and part of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. And NATO is providing now, as you said, serious and strong practical support to the United States and the U.S.-led coalition operations that are going on in the world today: a unique contribution, political cohesion through Article 5; real capabilities, like the AWACS aircraft that will be flying over continental United States by Friday of this week; the tying-in of the partners and the partnership, military interoperability that worked so well for the coalition in the Gulf war; and a new look at the adaptation of forces so that we're ready to deal with the threats of the future, just as we were able to deal with the enemies of the past.

So the Alliance will continue to combine the best of America and Europe at this difficult and troubled time.

These terrorists are not 10 feet tall; they are not insuperable; they're not unvanquishable. But we are, and we can win, and we certainly will win. And I'm very, very proud that NATO and the 19 nations of the Alliance are at the heart of a global coalition against the most evil criminals of our age.

I'm very proud, Mr. President, that you thought fit to describe me as a candidate for being a Texan. [*Laughter*] Given my background, I know that you've been in Scotland before, and I haven't been in Texas, but I'll take it as a compliment. And I believe that you could be a Scotsman as well—[*laughter*—like the great Scotsmen who made this great country as well and who, at the moment, happen to be leading this Alliance. And this Scotsman, in particular, is proud to be doing it and is determined that we'll win.

Thank you very much.

The President. Thank you, sir. God bless you. Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:51 p.m. in the Colonnade at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Jiang Zemin of China.

Remarks at the Department of Defense Service of Remembrance in Arlington, Virginia *October 11, 2001*

Please be seated. President and Senator Clinton, thank you all for being here. We have come here to pay our respects to 125 men and women who died in the service of America. We also remember 64 passengers on a hijacked plane, those men and women, boys and girls who fell into the hands of evildoers and also died here exactly one month ago.

On September 11th, great sorrow came to our country. And from that sorrow has come great resolve. Today, we are a nation awakened to the evil of terrorism and determined to destroy it. That work began the moment we were attacked, and it will continue until justice is delivered.

Americans are returning, as we must, to the normal pursuits of life. But we know